

VZCZCXR06709  
PP RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO  
DE RUEHNR #2344/01 1570808  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 060808Z JUN 07  
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0134  
INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE  
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME 0178  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 NAIROBI 002344

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SUBJECT: SOMALIA HUMANITARIAN UPDATE - PROTECTION  
CONCERNS IN MOGADISHU

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¶11. SUMMARY: Reports from humanitarian agencies highlight grave humanitarian protection concerns in Mogadishu. Key issues include ongoing violent attacks, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and evictions from public buildings. While the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) are actively monitoring and reporting on violations, insecurity and limited access is hindering the implementation of protection programs. USAID's Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and State/PRM, are supporting protection monitoring efforts through UNHCR and UNICEF. Septel will address humanitarian access status. End summary.

#### ONGOING VIOLENCE

¶12. Despite the cessation of major military operations in Mogadishu, civilians continue to suffer collateral damage and injury from insurgent and counterinsurgent activities. UN's Department of Safety and Security reports at least one security incident, ranging from hand grenade explosions to road side bombs, each day. Medical facilities continue to receive civilians with weapon-related wounds.

#### UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

¶13. Heavy fighting between insurgents and TFG and Ethiopian troops in Mogadishu in March and April left an unknown quantity of UXO scattered throughout the city. The UN World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF report an increase in UXO-related injuries at

health facilities as the fighting subsided and people began transiting through the city again. According to UNICEF, children are the most at risk of injury as they are often unaware of the threat. On May 5, two children were killed and eight others injured when a UXO that they were playing with exploded. A similar incident occurred on May 27, injuring seven children.

¶4. Humanitarian agencies are emphasizing the need for UXO removal and mine risk education (MRE) activities. Due to insecurity and limited access, humanitarian organizations have been unable to carry out a full assessment of the threat of UXOs. As access improves, however, the Danish Demining Group (DDG), which has experience with demining in Somaliland, is planning a four-week assessment to determine the extent of the problem in Mogadishu. DDG hopes to begin the survey in June, security permitting. UNICEF, UNHCR and UNDP will participate in the assessment and help prepare a plan of action for a six-month program.

¶5. In addition, UNICEF has begun broadcasting UXO awareness radio spots through Horn Afrique in Mogadishu. UNICEF is also bringing in surplus MRE materials from a program implemented by Handicap International in Somaliland.

¶6. UNHCR and UNICEF reported that discussions are underway with the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) to identify potential UXO clearance and MRE activities within the mission's mandate. UNHCR also said that the UN Mine Action Service has been requested to assist in UXO clearance and awareness in Somalia.

#### EVICTIONS FROM PUBLIC BUILDINGS

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¶7. According to UNHCR, nearly 250,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were residing in Mogadishu prior to the recent fighting, some of which have lived as squatters on government property for the last 15 years. In an effort to re-establish government offices in Mogadishu, the TFG recently announced that IDPs will not be allowed to occupy government-owned buildings and land. Those who are currently in the buildings will be evicted and those who fled the city during the recent fighting will not be allowed to return to domicile in government-owned buildings.

¶8. The TFG has reportedly established a committee to address the internal resettlement of people who are unable to return to their prior residence. However, UNHCR, which is the lead agency for the Somalia Protection Cluster, reports no evidence that the committee is operational. Furthermore, UNHCR noted that there is currently no clear point of contact within the TFG on this issue, with four separate entities demanding to be consulted on IDP issues: the Mayor of Mogadishu, the National Refugee Committee, the Office of the Prime Minister, and the newly established but not yet operational evictions committee. Despite the four entities claiming to have a role, none have responded to UNHCR's requests for a resettlement plan.

#### PROTECTION MONITORING EFFORTS

¶9. Protection is an important component of OFDA's mandate and Somalia strategy. OFDA-funded programs mainstream protection into traditional sector activities to reduce the risk and extent of harm to civilians. In addition, OFDA along with State/PRM - supports stand-alone protection programs like UNHCR and UNICEF's protection monitoring systems in Somalia. So far in FY 2007, USAID's Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has provided \$575,000 to UNICEF for

child protection activities and plans to provide approximately \$300,000 to UNHCR for IDP protection programs.

¶10. Insecurity remains a key impediment for UNICEF and UNHCR in Somalia. While active in monitoring and advocacy through implementing partners, UNICEF and UNHCR hope to become more operational in the protection sector as security and access improve. Both agencies note that monitoring provides a clearer picture of the protection environment; however, insecurity continues to hinder prevention of abuses.

#### UNICEF CHILD PROTECTION MONITORING

¶11. UNICEF is mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 1612 to monitor and report on child rights violations in Somalia. UNICEF has trained nearly 40 child protection monitors from 20 non-governmental organizations to assist in this effort. These monitors utilize a standard method for reporting violations to UNICEF which inputs the information into a database. The information is analyzed and presented to the UN Security Council on a regular basis.

¶12. In addition, UNICEF supports a network of child protection advocates throughout the country. The network is comprised of 32 two-person teams trained by UNICEF. Teams visit a community for two to three weeks during which time the team conducts a protection

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survey, carries out child rights education, and assists in setting up community-based protection programs. The team returns to the community on a bi-annual basis to provide follow-up support.

#### UNHCR PROTECTION MONITORING NETWORK

¶13. As the lead agency for protection issues under the UN Cluster System, UNHCR leads monthly protection cluster meetings in Nairobi and manages the Protection Monitoring Network (PMN), which tracks protection incidents through partners on the ground. UNHCR obtains information regarding human rights violations and the humanitarian condition of populations of concern, such as IDPs and refugees, through various sources, including local media, hospitals, and local partners. Currently, 32 partner organizations provide information to UNHCR for the weekly PMN reports that coincide with the agency's Population Movement Tracking reports. These reports have provided essential information to the humanitarian community for programming and advocacy activities.

¶14. UNHCR has trained 18 local NGOs to increase awareness of human rights issues and to inform victims of violations of the various response mechanisms that are available to them. UNHCR is also training Somalis to become trainers on protection concerns in an effort to expand awareness and mobilize government officials, and traditional and religious leaders on human rights.

#### CONCLUSION

¶15. Protection remains a major concern in the fragile political/military context of Mogadishu. UN and other efforts to monitor protection violations are increasing, but efforts to prevent them are in the early stages. They will depend on continuing improvement in the security situation and increased access by humanitarian agencies.

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